



FÉDÉRATION DÉMOCRATIQUE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES  
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION  
FEDERACIÓN DEMOCRÁTICA INTERNACIONAL DE MUJERES  
Международная Демократическая Федерация Женщин  
國際婦女民主聯合會

15th September, 1952

BERLIN W8

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FEDEINFEM - BERLIN

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PRAGUE, BANQUE D'ETAT 6149

Dear Friends,

We are sending herewith a copy of a letter sent by the WIDF to Mrs. Roosevelt, in response to her letter to us in which she challenges our position on the use of germ warfare in Korea by the U.S. Government.

We feel that since the use of germ warfare is so grave a charge, the facts so abundantly clear, the responsibility that rests on the American people so great, and the guilt of the American government so serious, that we take this opportunity to restate our position. Mrs. Roosevelt's letter has received wide publicity in the press and has been sent by her to all national and world organisations.

We present this document to you with the firm conviction that if the truth were known to the American women, they would act to put a stop to this cruel war. We give our reasons for this confidence. We further feel that Mrs. Roosevelt in her support of the war policies of the U.S. Government, and her record as U.S. representative in the United Nations does not entitle her to speak for the American women on this question.

The WIDF is sincerely interested in the true voice of the American women. We know the anguish of American mothers who are losing their sons in this useless war. We ask you to write us your opinion. And above all we ask you to utilise the information contained in our letter to make known the facts and to do everything possible to put a stop to the war of extermination being conducted against the Korean people, while at the same time saving your own sons from destruction.

Should you desire further information we will be happy to furnish it to you.

Most sincerely yours,

*Marie-Claude Vaillant-Couturier*

Marie-Claude VAILLANT-COUTURIER  
General Secretary

*The text printed below is the reply addressed to Mmes. Roosevelt, Sampson and Strauss by the Women's International Democratic Federation on the question of bacteriological warfare.*

*The W.I.D.F. considers bacteriological warfare to be so serious an attack upon humanity that it deems it necessary to outline its position once again before the bar of world opinion.*

5th September 1952

Mrs. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt,

We have received the letter signed by Mrs. Edith Sampson, Miss Anna Lord Strauss and yourself, purporting to answer, in the name of the "women in the United States", our **Open Letter to the American Women of May 1952**.

In this letter we stated that the use of germ warfare in Korea was being kept from the people of the United States of America and expressed our

"full confidence that when the truth is known to them, they will join with the millions in every corner of the world who have denounced this monstrous crime and are demanding an end to the war in Korea".

We cited facts from indisputable sources, which proved that germ warfare is being carried out in Korea.

Your letter repeats the denials by which the press, radio and Government of the United States attempt to conceal the truth. As Robert Miller, a United Press editor, recently admitted when addressing newspaper editors in Nevada, "We are not giving the truth about Korea, and we have not been".

The Government of the United States simultaneously denies these facts and boasts of the systematic preparation and manufacture of germ weapons, while at the same time, captured United States fliers have admitted, in sworn statements, that they have dropped germ bombs in Korea and North China. As recently as May 19th, 1952, the magazine NEWSWEEK stated: —

"... The army doesn't intend to give up its research. It is asking an appropriation of 17,197,000 dollars for expanding the biological warfare research at Camp Detrick, Maryland."

At this very moment, the people in Long Island (New York) are protesting against the construction in their community of a germ warfare research laboratory costing millions of dollars to manufacture millions of death germs. The Long Island residents see in this germ factory a deadly menace to themselves and their families. All the denials in the world will not shake their conviction that germ warfare is a dreadful reality.

A constantly growing number of eminent American citizens are raising their voices against the shame which is being brought upon their country. The recent letter to President Truman by 40 prominent Americans, including Professor Theodor Roseberry, a director of United States Armed Forces germ warfare research during World War II, calls for ratification by the United States Government of the 1925 Geneva Convention, which outlaws germ weapons and poisonous gases. It says: —

"As we recall the purposeful and planned destruction of the Korean countryside, the command to 'kill anything that moves', the million casualties among Korean civilians, the vast sums of money being spent by the U.S. on bacteriological warfare research, and the boasting by military spokesmen of our progress in this field, we can understand how the world can believe that those who would use burning gasoline would not hesitate to employ death-dealing bacteria."

Certainly the American mothers who have been called upon to "raise a generation of killers", the American people who are being taught contemptuously to refer to the Korean as "gooks", and who have seen from year to year that the lynching of Negroes goes unpunished in their own country, can understand that a Government which pursues such a policy will not scruple to use germ weapons in its genocidal war against the Korean people.

In the United States of America and throughout the world, millions of voices are raised demanding that the United States Government ratify the Geneva Convention of 1925. International organisations have joined in this demand, such as the International League of Red Cross Societies at its Toronto Conference this summer. The United States Government, however, remains, together with Japan, the only major power to refuse to sign this Convention, brazenly stating that ratification would be "out of date".

Faced with the precise charges brought against it, the United States Government evades these by presenting unacceptable proposals. In proposing that the International Committee of the Red Cross investigate germ warfare charges, it tries, as even Walter Lipmann of the NEW YORK HERALD-TRIBUNE has stated, to "pick its own judges". To propose this Committee, which is composed of 25 Swiss citizens — and which is not the same body as the International League of Red Cross Societies — is simply an attempt to prevent the setting up of an impartial body qualified to investigate the facts.

In our organisation there are millions of women who lost their loved ones in Hitler's concentration camps and thousands who themselves will bear for the rest of their lives the ineffaceable scars and memories of their own sufferings in these camps. They will never forget that it was Dr. Otto Lehner, one of the senior delegates to the International Red Cross Committee, and other members of the Committee, who visited Hitler's concentration camps during World War II, and who deliberately concealed from the world the barbaric atrocities committed there, at a time when millions were undergoing torture and dying in these very camps.

No more acceptable is the proposal to entrust the World Health Organisation with the investigation. As a body of the United Nations Organisation — in whose name

savage and aggressive war is being conducted against the Korean people — it has no claim whatsoever to being the impartial body required

The Women's International Democratic Federation, consisting of 135 million women in 65 countries, has from the first day of the Korean war condemned it as unjust and shameful. We have consistently fought against the countless atrocities committed against the Korean people and have given the Korean people our full support.

The Women's International Democratic Federation includes in its national organisations the Union of Korean Women which unites in the north and south of the country over 2 million members. The sufferings and heroic deeds of the Korean women in defending their violated homeland have become known to the whole world. For years the national organisations of the Women's International Democratic Federation have been able to follow, step by step, the efforts of the Korean people to achieve the unification of their country and to win the right to settle their own affairs, in the face of the American occupation and the corrupt regime of Syngman Rhee maintained by the United States Government.

The Women's International Democratic Federation, in May, 1951, sent to Korea a Women's International Commission of investigation composed of women of widely differing political opinions and organisations, from 17 different countries. They published the now-famous report, "WE ACCUSE", on the atrocities committed against the Korean people by United States and Syngman Rhee troops. Overwhelmed with horror and indignation at what they had seen, these women, despite being accused of treason, despite imprisonment and persecution, have brought the truth about Korea to the people of their countries. Noteworthy is the case of Lilly Waechter, the West German representative on this Commission, who upon returning to West Germany was imprisoned by the United States military authorities.

The Women's International Democratic Federation demands, and will continue to demand, until this ghastly war is over, the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction, the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the exchange of all prisoners-of-war. The 13th Session of the Executive Committee of the Women's International Democratic Federation, which met in July 1952, addressed a Message to the women of all countries, calling, upon them to re-double their efforts to stop this war, which, by the vilest methods, is systematically destroying a whole population, a whole civilisation. It calls upon them to take part in the People's Congress for Peace which will take place in Vienna this December, in order with the utmost vigour to demonstrate their will "to see violence and war replaced by the spirit of negotiation and understanding among the peoples".

We know that in this we have the support of the peace-loving women of the world, including the women of the United States of America. Like all mothers, American mothers do not want their sons to die on foreign battlefields in aggressive and shameful wars, or to be brutalised by being made the instruments for revolting actions.

Wherever American women have learnt the truth about the character of the Korean war, they have raised their voices and taken action.

On 25th June, the second anniversary of the aggression in Korea, 1,000 American women demonstrated before the headquarters of the United Nations demanding "No Third Year of War in Korea". In the State of Washington, three mothers of soldiers in the United States Army initiated a movement to give the people of their state an opportunity to vote for peace. In Louisville, Kentucky, 200 wives and mothers of men in the 623rd National Guardsmen's Field Artillery demanded that their menfolk be brought back from Korea. In Little Rock, Arkansas, the father of a prisoner-of-war collected in 30 days one million signatures to a petition calling for an immediate exchange of all prisoners-of-war. Many mothers in different parts of the country are refusing to accept their sons' posthumous medals, as a protest against those who sent them to their death.

When the women of the United States learnt of the use of burning gasoline against defenceless women and children, when they learnt of the savage massacre of unarmed prisoners-of-war on Koje Island, by protesting indignantly they expressed their will for peace.

You yourselves have not joined with them in raising your voices against this horror — the systematic extermination of women and children by burning them alive. Neither the sorrow of the American mother nor the martyrdom of the mother of Korea has aroused from you the least protest to your Government which sacrifices their children. You did nothing when your Government boastfully set out to raze by bombing 78 Korean towns, the pitiful remnants of homes already reduced to ashes.

You claim that you denounce germ warfare. Yet in your capacity of United States representatives in the United Nations Organisation, you have taken no steps whatever to condemn it or to press for ratification of the Geneva Convention by your Government. When your Government's spokesmen recently repudiated as "unrealistic and actually harmful" the statement of principle made by the late President Roosevelt in 1943, that the United States of America would not use bacteriological warfare unless the enemy used it first, you said nothing.

Your attitude demonstrates that you are trying to conceal the truth, to hide the guilt of the United States Government regarding the Korean war, and is revealing you to the women of the whole world as accessories to this crime against humanity. They judge you not by your words but by your deeds.

Yours truly,

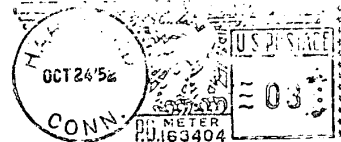
*M. Vaillant-Couturier*

Marie-Claude VAILLANT-COUTURIER

General Secretary

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*Give*  
TO YOUR  
COMMUNITY  
CHEST



General Walter Bedell Smith  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C.

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OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

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REMARKS:

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